

# THE PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL



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## **PR ON THE LIGHTER SIDE**

By BERT NEVINS

## **A GOOD COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM**

By SAMUEL C. GALE

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**VOLUME 5**  
**SEPTEMBER**

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## THE PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

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# PR JOURNAL

Volume 5  
Number 9

SEPTEMBER, 1949

## *Public Relations on the Lighter Side*

By BERT NEVINS

President, Bert Nevins, Inc., New York City

"AIN'T FUNNY, MCGEE," is perfectly valid criticism of an enormous amount of contemporary public relations activity. To a publicity practitioner who has discovered over the years that a chuckle is one of the most important secret weapons in the entire arsenal of publicity techniques, the lack of humor in the profession is thoroughly appalling.

Humor in publicity or public relations is by no means a matter of hiring a high-priced gagman, writing side-splitting copy or hitting either an editor or the public over the head with an ancient joke.

Publicity humor is a specialized art. It is in a way related to the technique of a radio comedian, such as Arthur Godfrey, who by gently kidding his sponsor on the air cleverly builds up valuable word of mouth recognition for sponsor and products. It is also related, in a sense, to the comic strip type of advertising which plugs a product or a service in a light-hearted narrative form.

Perhaps the key phrase in describing publicity humor should be "tongue in cheek". An idea is presented to an editor in tongue-in-cheek fashion. A release

is composed in tongue-in-cheek style. A stunt is conducted in tongue-in-cheek manner.

The change in pace provided by the light touch is a welcome relief to the editor daily deluged with grim statistics, alarming graphs, weighty pronouncements by executives and dire predictions of things to come if a policy is not adopted or a product not purchased.

I can explain it best by citing several examples from the experience of my organization. Take the doughnut. For the last 11 years it has been the privilege and pleasure of my office to publicize the Doughnut Corporation of America. Of course we have relied basically on sound, standard publicity methods to tell our story. But in addition we have secured extraordinary results with the tongue-in-cheek touch.

First, we organized the National Dunking Association, a non-political, non-dues-paying organization that exists solely for good fellowship. Celebrities, political personalities, outstanding citizens of all types are named to membership in the National Dunking Association and photographed in the act of

demonstrating their dunking prowess. There is something undeniably mirth-provoking in a simple picture of a man or woman dunking a doughnut in a cup of coffee. Editors are quick to grasp the human interest value of such a picture and run it almost as fast as we can supply them. Personalities who wish to be regarded by the public as folksy fellows are delighted to accept membership in the National Dunking Association to the accompaniment of flash bulbs.

### What We Did

Once the Dunking Association was established, we elaborated on the art of dunking. We sponsored public debates on dunking methods. We persuaded radio comedians to tell dunking jokes. We supplied gag ideas to cartoonists and comic strip artists. We ran dunking contests and selected dunking queens.

Never did we say to an editor, "You'll die laughing at this dunking idea—it's so funny." We simply presented the idea or story or picture with tongue in cheek and with deep conviction that the average editor is usually desperate for light, human interest material to balance his pages. Most of the time we were right.

Such a method, of course, has its dangers. If the humorous aspect of a product or service is not selected with great discrimination and handled with prudence, you are likely to find your client the laughing stock of the entire town. And very shortly you are no longer serving that client. That happened to many of the radio comedians who went overboard ribbing their sponsors. But there is always a way of finding a middle road that will make clients and editors happy and keep the public grinning.

Another instance of successful humorous approach has been our work in behalf of the National Institute of Diaper Services. One way we did this was to organize the National Expectant Fa-

thers Clubs. These are local groups of fathers-to-be who meet under the auspices of diaper service companies to take courses in baby care, feeding and diapering. There is hardly an editor alive who can resist a photograph of a grown man with safety pins in his teeth, fierce purpose in his gaze, a square of white cloth in one hand, and a squirming, kicking baby in the other. It works like a charm.

The National Expectant Fathers Clubs have official membership cards, lapel pins and a lofty aim—to make the expectant father the remembered rather than the forgotten man. The idea is basically funny. It is hardly necessary to embellish it to convey to editors the thought that a story on activities of the local Expectant Fathers Club will shape into the kind of piece that a man will laugh at over breakfast and say to his wife, "Listen to this." Later on the train he comments to his commuting friend, "Did you read the piece about the Expectant Fathers Club," and in the office he says to the fellow at the next desk who is soon to be a father, "Jim, there's a story in this morning's paper you ought to take a look at."

That is the kind of publicity which really makes a household word of your client's name.

### Self Perpetuating

The humorous publicity story is, in a way, self-perpetuating. The original release to the city desk results in a news or feature story. An editorial writer or columnist reading the paper with an eye for material, picks up your story as theme for his daily essay. A cartoonist draws a picture as spontaneous commentary on the story. The idea turns up in a bit of radio dialogue. All this happens provided you have hit upon a humorous idea or approach that is so fund-

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# The Importance to Industry of A Good Community Relations Program

By SAMUEL C. GALE\*

FOR ANY INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS, community relations, public service and employee relations overlap and complement one another in many ways. The attitude of employees is necessarily influenced by the attitude of others in the community. And to a very substantial extent the attitude of the community toward industry and business is shaped by the attitude and actions of its employees.

Since this whole problem deals with human beings, who are very complex individuals representing a multitude of shades of opinions and points of view on many questions and issues, it is not a simple problem to approach. But the various studies that have been made of public attitude and belief, aided by simple common sense, do give us a few pretty well established facts from which to start.

Overwhelmingly the American public believes in freedom of the individual and in the basic principle of free competitive enterprise. While in our more complicated industrial economy it may not be quite as strong as it was in pioneer days, the basic concept that in America every child born has an opportunity to become the head of a large corporation or president of the United States, continues to be a basic and cherished principle. As Doctor James Conant, President of Harvard, ably

pointed out in his address before the Boston Conference on Distribution, over a year and a half ago, entitled, "America's Fitness to Survive", we are practically unique in having founded and developed our society upon the broad basis of equality of opportunity for all.

However, when the average individual attempts to translate these basic principles in which he generally and strongly believes, into an interpretation of his own lot, and the business and industrial life of his community and country, he is very apt to become hopelessly confused. In my own opinion this is primarily due to ignorance rather than to vicious propaganda. In consequence, I firmly believe that the approach to this whole problem is primarily one of public education in basic economic facts rather than one of counter-propaganda. To be sure, there is much misinformation being passed about and a certain amount of propaganda inimical to our basic philosophy and principles. But my own feeling is that this is relatively a minor factor, and the major factor is *the failure of American business and industry and education to enlighten the masses of American citizens on the simple basic facts and forces behind business and industrial development and operation*. From the standpoint of education, Dr. Thomas H. Briggs, who in his many years of distinguished service at Columbia became recognized as the dean of instructors in public education, feels keenly this lack in the development of our educational system. And Doctor Claude Robinson, head of Opinion Research, and many others who have in-

\*SAMUEL C. GALE is Vice President in Charge of Advertising and Public Services, General Mills, Inc. "The Importance to Industry of A Good Community Relations Program" is a talk delivered by him in St. Paul, Minnesota on July 26th before a meeting of the National Industrial Council.

tensively studied the situation, feel even more strongly that business and industry themselves have failed to do their part in this educational process.

### Primary Obligation

That does not mean there is not today and will not always be a primary obligation upon business and industry to seek sincerely in their own enlightened self-interest to improve the functioning of our business economic system and to continue to give more and more of the fruits of this improvement to workers and to the public at large. This has been the history of American industrial development, and must continue. But at the same time that this obligation is being met, it seems increasingly important and necessary that the job of better informing the public of how our system has grown and developed, and how it can give the greatest benefits to most people through its further development, be carried on.

It is natural for human beings to feel that they are not receiving full recognition for their contributions. Conversely, it is easy for them to feel that someone else is receiving too much. With our increasingly complicated corporate and financial structure, it is also natural that this feeling should primarily be directed toward American business and industry. On one simple and vitally important point all surveys agreed. The American public believes that business and industry is earning from three to six times what it actually is, measured either in relation to percent of sales or to the amount paid workers. Unfortunately, this belief is particularly prevalent among certain leaders of thought. Reliable surveys show that industrial employees believe the "take" of management and stockholders is about 25c on each sales dollar. Other surveys have shown that the average citizen believes

it is as high as thirty cents. The same surveys show that people consider 10 cents on the dollar a fair profit. The truth of the matter is that industry has earned well under 10 cents on the sales dollar. In General Mills, for instance, our profit was less than three cents on each dollar of sales during the record fiscal year ending in 1948. Contrast this with the popular misconceptions!

As another example, in a recent study made of a cross-section of the American public, among a group of stockholders nearly twice as many thought that business and industry were not making enough profits currently as felt that they were making too much. On the other hand, among a cross-section of teachers, nearly thirty times as many felt that too much profits were made as felt that the profits were insufficient. While the selfish interests of stockholders affected this view somewhat, overwhelmingly it reflected the fact that stockholders *knew* how much profits were being made, whereas in general teachers did not know, and undoubtedly believed profits were several times as great as they actually are.

### Informing and Educating

Now again to get to the problem of informing and educating important segments of the public on these basic business economic facts, our company has carried on a substantial service and educational program with teachers over a period of years. As one result of this activity the attitude of these same teachers toward the profits of General Mills as an individual company was far less unfavorable than their attitude toward business and industry as a whole. While in all probability they did not know nearly as much about the basic functioning and financial picture of General Mills as they might, they did know more than they knew about most other concerns.

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Another point brought out by this and other similar studies is the general lack of knowledge on the part of the public as to how business and industry operates and thinks. In answer to the broad question in respect to a number of leading industrial companies, "Do you feel that this company is unselfish and public-spirited or selfish and grasping?" while the positive response in most instances was much greater than the negative response, in most cases the big majority admitted they didn't know. And the fact is that in most cases they didn't know, which is a sign of their honesty as well as their lack of information.

It would seem that the best place to start this process of education was right in the community where a specific industry conducts major operations. Going back to our starting point, this is a two-way job, involving both relations with our own employees and relations with other citizens of the community.

### Channels of Approach

There are naturally a host of ways in which this problem can be approached. In general it would seem to me that the field broadly divides itself into three segments, all of which are important and interrelated.

The first concerns those activities which are more directly aimed at employee relationship, although many of these in turn have a bearing upon community relationship as well.

The second involves those types of community activity aimed directly at contributing to a better knowledge and understanding of how your business or industry operates, the services it renders, and how the benefit from this operation is distributed among consumers, workers, management and owners.

The third broad field is participation in other community activities in order

to discharge obligations as a good corporate citizen.

### Attitude of Management

It seems to me that the basic underlying factor in a community relations program is the attitude of top management itself. We know there is a very direct relationship between the sales manager's enthusiasm, his drive and his understanding—and his success in solving difficult marketing problems. By the same token there is a direct relationship between the enthusiasm, drive and understanding of a management group and its success in creating sound community relations. In other words, neither in the sales field nor in the field of public opinion can objectives be won through casual attention.

Let's put it another way. Through the years management has learned that its investment in product advertising pays big dividends. Hundreds of millions of dollars are invested every year to secure these dividends. In my opinion, management is coming to appreciate the fact that talent, and time, and money invested in building understanding and approval of business in the local community, is one way to guarantee the future existence of that business as well as industry in general. While each industry and company has its own problems and limitations, I shall take the liberty of citing a few illustrations of approaches and accomplishments from my own company.

In General Mills we employ a good many techniques in employee relations that fall into the first of the three broad categories I have outlined. In effect they are a form of community relations. First and foremost of these, is a policy of fair wages and good working conditions. Equally important is a labor relations policy that offers opportunity for advancement within the company,



and that keeps the door open for communication between employee and supervisor, and on up the line to top management.

### Indoctrination Kit

For example, every General Mills employee, upon joining the company, receives an indoctrination kit of informative literature. This literature, presented to him piece by piece at regular intervals to encourage reading and assimilation, describes such company policies as:

1. Our retirement plan, in which all employees are automatically covered. The company pays a good portion of the cost.
2. Our General Mills Hospital Association, whereby the employee, through nominal payments, can secure disability insurance for himself and medical and hospital benefits for his whole family. The company pays a good share of these costs also.
3. Our plan for employee thrift accounts, where deposits pay 3% interest when left with the company.
4. Our policy of paid vacations, sick-leaves, and other work conditions.

The employee is then provided with a showing of a special indoctrination film that shows his relation to the company, and describes the whole organization.

In addition there are continuing employee relation projects. Medical attention is provided while on the job. In our headquarters offices a lunch room and lounge, as well as library facilities, are made available. We have our employee training courses, whereby instruction in the flour milling business and other aspects of our operations are provided gratis. Enrollment is voluntary.

All these employee relations devices are in fact community relations tools. We take the view that the 12,000 employees of General Mills are the front

line salesmen for our company's reputation. They testify in their daily contacts as to the character of General Mills. What they say to the neighbor, or to the relative, or to companions gathered at the club, determines in a large way what the community thinks of us.

We had an illustration of community relations paying off during the war when we acquired a sugar plant at Belmond, Iowa, and were confronted with the necessity of converting it to a soy-bean oil facility. When the labor shortage threatened the project, a good part of the town of Belmond turned out voluntarily and worked seven days a week to complete it. The preacher, the lawyer, and the businessman worked side by side pouring concrete, and nailing up timbers, until the job was done.

Now our second category of community relations is aimed directly at creating a better knowledge and understanding of how the business or industry operates on the community level. Here we must show the services it renders, and how the whole community benefits.

### Test Campaigns

General Mills has run two test campaigns, in Spokane, Washington, and Ogden, Utah, during the past two years, to further knowledge of our operations there. We have flour mills in both cities. Here we have employed the devices of newspaper advertisements and public open houses. We have run nine ads a year, each featuring local employees and activities, in the Spokane and Ogden newspapers. These advertisements are designed to help build the employee's prestige in his job. We have talked about the particular employee by name. We have shown him at his job in large illustrations, and have shown how he and the work he does are integrated in the community. In these same ads we have also told some of the economic

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facts about our company. We show how much General Mills pays its employees in relation to its total earnings. For instance, in the fiscal year ended in 1948, we paid wages, salaries and retirement benefits of \$42,000,000, or seven times the approximately \$6,000,000 we paid out in dividends to stockholders. Our earnings that year were \$13,000,000, or less than one-third of what we paid out to employees. And flour milling is a predominantly automatic process.

### An Ad That Told . . .

At Spokane we climaxed the two-year advertising program with a community-wide open house at the plant as part of the city's Lilac Festival last May. More than ten thousand persons visited the plant during two days. They not only saw how flour is made. They saw a great many economic displays telling what General Mills means to the community in terms of local payroll, the amount spent in local taxes, and what is paid for wheat and other raw materials in the area.

As I pointed out before, there is frequently an overlap of the respective spheres of public relations, whether they be community public relations, employee relations, or a national campaign based on institutional advertising. Last spring, General Mills sponsored a full page institutional advertisement in several national periodicals that was also a community relations device. This advertisement appeared in *Life*, the *Saturday Evening Post* and *This Week Magazine*. It showed a large picture in color of the main street in Kankakee, Illinois, where we had just completed a chemical oils extraction plant. The advertisement was headlined, "Why We Moved to Kankakee." The copy dwelt on the theme of how the whole science of extracting fatty acids and glyceroids from organic fats and oils dates back to the

French chemist, Chevreul in 1815; it told how these products are used today. Then it emphasized why we chose Kankakee, Ill., for the site of our new plant—because it was close to important raw materials—corn, soybeans, etc.—because it was a good shipping point; because it had capable young men to join us in an exciting industrial adventure. And because Kankakee, as a moderate sized community, means pleasant homes for our employees' children, and new friends for General Mills. It told of the employment and payrolls we offer.

### The Pay Off

This advertisement had a terrific impact within the city of Kankakee. Some of the civic leaders informed us that it did more to "put Kankakee on the map" than anything that had ever happened there. Public appreciation of General Mills grew proportionately. This was a unique opportunity which will not often occur. But it does illustrate what can be done when the occasion offers.

But how do we know when we have obtained a favorable public attitude? Here we come back again to the science of opinion and market analysis that has done so much to make feasible this whole science of community and general public relations. We can take the public pulse as it beats for our enterprise within a community by employing the sampling techniques of modern market analysis. We can point up the areas of grave misunderstanding, and tailor our educational campaign to correct them. Then we can make periodical checks to note our progress and to ascertain any other broad changes in the public attitude.

Now we come to the third broad field of community public relations. That concerns participation by the business and its employees in community activi-

ties. Here is a direct channel through which the enterprise can discharge its obligation as a good corporate citizen.

### The Corporation and the Citizen

We have a corollary here between the corporation and the individual citizen. The citizen, if he is to live up to his personal social and economic responsibilities, takes an active interest and participation in community affairs. He may join the P.T.A., hold membership in a church or religious denomination, and belong to one or several professional organizations aligned with his interest. Through them he gives service. Similarly, there is a definite responsibility for business and industry to prove themselves good and sincere corporate citizens. This includes a wise and reasonably generous policy of financial support of sound and needed civic activities, such as Community Chests, needed hospital facilities, etc. With the growing needs and demands in this broad field, the problem of establishing and administering a sound policy is not easy. But it is vitally important to do two things: first, convince the community that in relation to its operations and profits, a business or industry is assuming its fair share of responsibility in this field; and secondly (which is more difficult) to convince those working in various public causes that a fair and reasonable policy of distribution of contributions is maintained. This means careful thought, study and attention by responsible and informed people at all times.

Possibly more important in the long run in demonstrating good citizenship on the part of a business is personal participation in various civic enterprises. In the case of Chambers of Commerce and the like this is usually relatively simple. But there are many other fields of civic activity

where interest and constructive effort on the part of an industry and its people are equally important. This applies not only to specific projects such as needed new recreational, transportation and other facilities, but certain fields which require continued study and co-operation. It is our feeling that possibly the most basic and important field of all is that of public education. For a variety of reasons, business and industry for a long period of time have generally tended to neglect their civic responsibilities in this field. The principal views of business heard by educators come from those solely interested in reducing taxes. The result is a false concept that business and industry are not sympathetic to the real needs of education. In addition, due to a declining birth rate for two decades prior to the last war and other causes, the public school system of the nation and in most communities has deteriorated for a long period of time. In addition to other blows suffered, tens of thousands of young and able men and women left teaching during the war and have not returned. Physical plants in general ran down during the depression and war years. At the same time that this retrogression took place, the needs and importance of public education have increased tremendously. This is due both to the increasingly more complicated problems facing our future citizens, and the tremendous increase in the birth rate which has taken place during the past ten years. There is a sharp increase in the number of youngsters who are now entering and will be entering our schools. Six or eight years from now we will have nearly 30% more school age children in the country—a far greater increase in many communities.

From no angle, and particularly from the point of view of able young people training for and entering the teaching

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# RELATING COLLEGES TO THE SURROUNDING ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

By AVERELL BROUGHTON

New York City

THOSE OF US WHO BEAR THE LABEL Public Relations recognize, or should recognize, that our major task is one of reconciliation. We are living in a world of conflict and diverse interests. Our free American economy is founded upon the principle of competition. Competition means struggle, and struggle means friction. It is at this point that the work of public and industrial relations people becomes important. A machine can function despite the presence of an appreciable amount of friction, but at a given point friction will slow down a machine, destroy it, or bring it to a stand-still.

Our primary job, I think, is to help in the process of adjustment between the various elements in our community, help to avoid or minimize friction, and permit our free economy to work. If you wish to put it another way, on the political front democracy is without question the most desirable form of government devised by man. Our form of democracy, by which we mean representative government, is not functioning too well. Democracy must be made to work and helped to keep on working. At this point public and industrial relations and the other forms of activity with which we are associated have their important functions. Therefore, it seems to me the title of this talk is particularly apt. You of the colleges occupy a far more important function than we of

business, but it is of the same order. You can serve as centers of mutual understanding and of learning which promote comprehension of the complex factors which are involved in daily life under an industrial civilization.

Upon the college rests a great responsibility. It serves not only as a kind of machine which shapes and fashions the minds and personalities, the beliefs and hopes and fears of the millions who today pass through its doors—it serves also as a repository of the best that is said and thought with regard to our current problems. If the college is at odds with the world in which it exists, its usefulness is at an end in some directions. It then becomes like the monasteries of the Dark Ages, at best a storehouse of past learning, or at worst a museum sacred to outworn beliefs and outmoded tradition.

This raises the immediate problem of the machinery by which we can relate the college to its surrounding economic structure. As a public relations counselor called upon to diagnose and prescribe, I would say that the problem impresses me as being clearly one of statement for purposes of agreement and prescription for purposes of action.

## *What is the situation?*

The statement I make is simply this. The college has a great responsibility to the community, the state, and the country in which it has its being and which give it support and sustenance. In this respect, I see little difference between the privately endowed college and the state supported institution. In each case the college is supported by other people's money and must justify its

Remarks of Averell Broughton, President of the Public Relations Society of America, Inc., at the Sixth Annual Institute of Higher Education, Scarritt College, Nashville, Tennessee, July 27, 1949.

existence. In several campaigns for additional endowments or funds for special purposes carried on by major institutions in the past year, the objectives were not reached. It seemed to me that the reason lay in the fact that no proper justification of their existence or special need had been made in terms which could be understood and appreciated by the business world to which they made their appeal. I am not going to go into the question of what groups should be expected to contribute under present conditions. It is common sense to recognize that under present taxation individual business men cannot give largely out of income. Business corporations of whatever nature must have practical and cogent reasons for gifts which are in effect gifts from their stockholders to an institution. I do not consider here gifts from wealth accumulated in past decades. Such wealth exists in lesser measure today, and not more than a very few colleges have an alumni body which represents in some measure the great fortunes of other times. Such groups do exist, and the problem of appealing to them is related to the one we discuss, but the appeals which move them are of a somewhat different order.

### Why Failures

The failures I have seen have come because a large industrial community had little understanding of what went on upon the campus of the college or university which lived like a somewhat aloof stranger in its midst. This perhaps is even more true for the women's colleges than for others, but it applies to all.

Therefore, I suggest that this essential problem which could be given the tag "community relations" is of the first importance. I do not like the label "community relations" because it seems to suggest a narrow and special set of

operations. Community relations is just one phase of the college's whole problem and is best not segregated.

### Area A Broad One

Institutions with an active extension program naturally come closer to the working day life of their communities, but the immediate area in terms of a college or institution or university is not just the physical area but the entire water shed from which flows its student body and to which its graduates repair. That area may be almost world-wide. There are alumni groups of some institutions in Latin countries with a larger potential than alumni groups in some of our large cities or even states. The lines of influence may travel far, and they must be followed in any campaign to demonstrate a college need or a college service.

May I give a simple and homely illustration of fundamental service to a business community or, if you prefer, a surrounding economic structure. I have attended several public relations institutes at which I have been a speaker or a participant. They have been given under the auspices of colleges or universities. Among the attendants at such institutes have been business men from the surrounding area. When these institutes have been vital and effective, the response has been immediate and gratifying. Not only do the business men who are attending give an immediate spark of recognition and appreciation, they take back to their companies or their industries a sense of contact and a story of experience and benefit which is almost measurable and of the greatest importance to the future of the college. Let us not forget that such institutes like this are in many ways quite different from the ordinary classroom or graduate seminar. They are planned wisely to produce a maximum

and lasting effect. They can, under the guidance of a wise president and an understanding board of trustees, tie the college into the economic structure which it serves with an immediacy and an effect which can be duplicated in ordinary college operations only over a period of years if at all. Quite properly we can use showmanship and all the arts of public impression. We can get attention from the members which a routine college course most certainly would not merit. We can get attendance from the business community which is even more important than the appearance of a few distinguished business men for honorary degrees.

#### Also . . .

There is another aspect of this economic interrelationship which I will mention only in passing. There is a current tendency to bring outstanding personalities with a general reputation of high publicity value into the college administration. Two splendid men, Governor Stassen and General Eisenhower, are immediate examples. That course has much to recommend it. Where the personalities and experience are appropriate, the action is successful on all counts. It makes the general public feel a special stake in the university. It may have its effect on fund raising. But it is a somewhat delicate maneuver. We do not fool our fellow men very much. If the motive is not directly concerned with the well-being of the college as an institution of learning and service, there can be a cynical reaction. But it is certainly true that the use of business or industrial talents upon a campus, even on a part-time basis, can produce a very healthy sense of common interest when all goes well.

Now, with your permission, I am going to look at the reverse of the medal. If it is true that business men

do not understand life on the campus or what goes on in the mind of an assistant professor (or a full professor), it is equally true that there is a corollary to this situation. I have spent seven or eight years in undergraduate, graduate work, and teaching on the campus of one of the great universities. When I began work, I had little understanding of business since I came from a professional family. I am the first eldest son in several generations who is not a Doctor of Medicine. And in the seven or eight years on the campus I added nothing to my knowledge of the business world through my reading of the daily newspapers, conversation with my classmates, students, and colleagues. I do not remember that I talked much with business men, and if I did, I am sure that we had little to discuss except personal matters or athletics in which we might have had a common interest. The fact that I was of a college faculty set me apart a little, I suppose, but whether up or down I am not sure. But I am certain that neither I nor the very great majority of our professors and instructors had more than a superficial consciousness of the existence of the business world. The president of that university was a lot smarter than the rest of us, I am sure, since he had collected an extremely wealthy and generous group of trustees and built a great endowment for the university. I suppose if we thought about business men at all, we concluded that their function was to provide money for the payment of salaries and the erection of buildings either by gift or legacy. That in itself was a practical enough viewpoint, but it did not go very far. I am not sure that it goes much further today in many places.

Finally, because of family responsibility, I went out into the business world and got myself a job. It happened to be with an advertising agency. For at least

two years I was unable to take business problems seriously or, for that matter, business people with appropriate solemnity. It seemed to me that the problems in the world I touched were absurdly simple. What I didn't understand was that the problems were simple and still are, but that the solutions to those problems lay through human beings—in this case, chiefly business men—and that people were not easy to deal with or handle. It took two years to break down my insulation to the point at which I began to have that worried feeling common to most business men faced with a problem, and that worry came chiefly from the people with whom and through whom we must work. I learned slowly that manufacturing problems are comparatively simple compared to sales problems save in a period of grave shortage such as the war. I came to understand that management problems concerned with things, yes, even with finances were comparatively simple compared to the problems faced in dealing with labor and other aspects of humanity which, of course, included customers, regulatory bodies, and competition.

### **The Practical and the Ideal**

I speak of this because I went into business comparatively late, and many people from the campus have never gone into business at all or have been away from the problems of everyday life in business for many years. Colleges give, like all schools, reasonable security. Few business men have any sense of security. Colleges deal, as professors like to tell us, with ideas—the best that has been thought and said—but I always remember what a wise old professor of chemistry, Dr. Mason, of Rensselaer Polytechnic said to me when I was struggling with a problem in delicate quantitative analysis. He said, "Mr. Broughton, it is my belief that the laws of nature were

never discovered in the laboratory." He was a great teacher, and he knew the difference between the practical and the ideal, but it took me years to understand his full meaning.

### **Business Life Important**

Perhaps by this time you will understand that I am tactfully trying to suggest that if the professor and the instructor and the harrassed dean or even president could find time to live a business life from time to time, perhaps for just a few weeks, the title of this talk would quickly be translated into action. In short, the college would find itself related to its surrounding economic structure because the language of business and the problems of business would be understandable and sympathetic to the college.

It seems to me that a genuine effort was made at one time, especially in our fresh-water colleges, to identify college life with that of surrounding business. It takes great ability to comprehend two fields of action and two points of view, and I am sure that there were many ludicrous failures. It was natural that Sinclair Lewis and others should ridicule the Babbitts of the campus. Courses in undertaking and in salesmanship and other necessary everyday operations sprouted incongruously within curricula. Such courses undoubtedly had their place in some schools either in extension or in schools of business, but there was a period of genuine confusion. Perhaps it is the reaction against this which I suggest has gone to far.

The idea of some colleges which calls for a mixture of work and study has a great deal to recommend it. There is nothing in the daily life of a business man which precludes a lively interest in the arts, in philosophy, or in any of the fields generally considered academic. It

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is too bad that our tradition today seems to divide them.

I do not have a short and simple solution to the problem of inter-relationship between college and the world of which it should be a part, but I do suggest that the fundamental answer to most of the practical problems of the college or university lies in an appropriate blending of academic and business experience and theory. The church is at its best when it is most practical. The professor is at his best when he is demonstrating without self-consciousness the value of his training to business men. The answer lies along such lines as these.

I am happy to say that my own experience in the field of public relations and human relations recognizes an essential principle in what I venture here. We know that men who work together come to understand and like each other. We know that men who live and work apart are suspicious and distrustful of each other. We remember that the ancient term for enemy was stranger.

Obviously I am not suggesting that we have a sudden merging of communi-

ties and efforts, but I do suggest that the college faculty especially make a special effort to identify itself with the business activities in its community. The engineering faculties would seem to have a special advantage, but since their interest outside is likely to be in their special field rather than the human problem which surrounds it, they may have no special advantage after all. Such efforts call for good taste and good judgment, but if education means anything, these qualities are already in existence on the campus in ample measure. If the campus can speak and understand the language of business with its problems today of taxes, of government competition, of organized labor under predatory bosses, in some cases—if the college can understand these problems not just as theories but as facts, they will not only be helpful to business and industry as never before, but they will grow in stature and in strength of every description to the point at which they will have the strength of the business civilization of which they are an integral part.

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"In an age of social ferment, such as the present, there is an unconscious search for leaders. Another way of describing the situation would be to say that leadership is being offered by competing groups and institutions, and circumstances will make the choice between them. We know the leaders of business today, and on the whole we know them favorably; but that the prevailing types of business leaders will continue in power and position is not to be assumed. Indeed, it is far from clear that business will continue to supply its own leaders. Certainly we must think long and deeply about leadership in a period of social tension."

—N. S. B. Gras in "Behavior of Business Men in a Changing World: Rise of Business Statesmanship", *Bulletin* of the Business Historical Society, March 1949.



¶ *The time has come to talk of  
the Tower of Babel, Public Relations and the . . .*

## SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

By KARL EGMONT ETTINGER, Dr. Jur.

Public Relations and Research Consultant, New York

IN HIS *Phantasia*, Walt Disney gave us the story of the "Sorcerer's Apprentice." Goethe, before him, in a famous poem, told us of the boy who had learned from his master a magic word that would turn a broom into a water-carrying servant. And so, when the master went to town, the apprentice ordered the broom to carry water and the broom obeyed. But the boy had forgotten the word that would make it stop. He had almost drowned by the time the sorcerer returned and spoke the magic word that turned the water-carrier back into a harmless broom.

We live in a time of technical perfection. Communications techniques permit us to reach larger and larger audiences every day. More and more apprentices, inexperienced in the art of leadership, attempt to invoke spirits they have not learned to master.

Public relations is the art of engineering social consent. Too many apprentices believe that they can be masters if they just know how to bring the broom to life. They know all about using the media of communication, and about publicity and public relations devices that have worked previously in other cases. We train new apprentices in universities and with textbooks by giving them case histories so that they can imitate the methods used by the masters of the public relations profession. But we fail to instruct them in the deeper science of how man behaves in society. Yet, without this knowledge, we offer our students nothing but an empty shell. The

case method is a useful didactic conveyance. But without an attempt to teach fundamental principles, we only create sorcerer's apprentices.

No engineer today would dare to build a bridge without a knowledge of engineering principles. Merely imitating other doctors without knowing the principles of medicine would not do for a surgeon. Engineering public opinion carries the highest responsibility of any profession. What other service influences the fate of mankind more than that rendered by those who mold our social life? The art of public relations is the technique of leadership. It is more than an ability to convey an idea by the clever use of communications media. A command of publicity techniques or the knowledge of a few case histories do not make a public relations man any more than the possession of a bat and ball makes a baseball player.

Public relations work is applied social science, and is concerned with society as a whole. No departmentalized approach will lead to an understanding of the possible social implications of specific public relations measures. If we want to avoid resembling the sorcerer's apprentice, we must understand what makes people think and act. A scientifically correct analysis of human actions and reactions in society based on all the findings of the social sciences is the fundamental postulate for mastering the art of public relations. The behavior of man in society is a fascinating field of study. For those who are undertaking a

job of mass persuasion such study is an indispensable working tool. The recent development of semantic investigation into a system of general semantics offers a promising method for the interpretation of social attitudes.

### The Semantic Approach to Public Opinion Problems

The word, "semantics," comes from the Greek, *semainein*, meaning to signal, to make signs. We find the same root in the word, "semaphore," the device used by our railroads to convey signals to locomotive engineers. The word, "semantics," was first used to give a name to the scientific analysis of the meaning of words. Semantics is the science of the nature and the meaning of words. The spoken and the written word are symbols like the arms or lights of a railroad semaphore — understandable to those who know their meaning. The same combination of letters or sounds may mean different things to people using different languages, or even to people using the same language, or even to one person, depending on the specific association of ideas connected with the use or perception of the "word" at a given occasion. Hugh Walpole, for instance, is a semanticist in the original sense of the term. In his book, *Semantics*,<sup>1</sup> he is concerned only with words. He promises three advantages to the students of his subject: first, they will understand better what they hear and read; second, they will talk and write more effectively; and, third, they will think more accurately.

This alone should be enough to deserve the attention of all those who consider molding the opinions of others their objective in life.

But beyond the field of verbal meanings, modern semanticists have studied more than the word symbols used in

human communications. They have discovered the importance of impressions conveyed from man to man on a non-verbal level. The non-verbal symbols have been recognized as equally important as words. By applying the findings of modern psychology, we have opened new avenues to understanding society.

Man is constantly on the receiving end of impressions that reach him through his eyes, his ears, his nose and all his other organs of perception. All these impressions acquire a meaning for the recipient. The meaning ascribed to the impression is associated in the mind with the circumstances under which the impression is received. Thus, non-verbal impressions convey meanings not basically different from the messages conveyed by words and word groups. We are conditioned to non-verbal experience as we are conditioned to words.

### Ideas

All symbols have one thing in common. They convey ideas. ("Idea" is another Greek word derived from *Eidolon* — little image, idol, the small image of all things the human eye perceives, the picture on the pupil of the eye.)

The Bible reports how, in building the tower of Babel, mankind's language was "confounded that they may not understand one another's speech," (*Genesis* XI. 7.). Can we reduce the dangers inherent in misunderstanding by knowing more about the art of conveying ideas? It seems that we can by knowing more about the mind of the masses. What Le Bon called the mind of the masses is, in reality, the process of verbal and non-verbal communications that shape the thinking and behavior of the individual in a crowd. Not since Gustave Le Bon wrote his *Psychologie des Foules* have we gained as much as we have since the coming of the school of "general semantics."

<sup>1</sup> W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1941.

Semantics, the science of the meaning of symbols, has become "*the study of how people act, with and under the influence of words and other symbols.*"<sup>1</sup> Today, Korzybski, Hayakawa, Lee, Johnson and their school of general semantics undertake "*the application of the findings of semantics to everyday life.*" They started with the application of semantic findings in the fields of teaching, education, and the personal adjustment of neuropsychiatric cases.

### New Approach to Social Science

In directing the attention of scientists to the symbol reactions of men, Korzybski and his school meant to contribute to the knowledge of the behavior of the individual in society. It has happened before in human history that the discoverer did not grasp the magnitude of his findings. Columbus died without knowing that he had discovered a new continent. He thought that he had reached the fabulous land of Zipangu. The group around Korzybski started out to assemble a new method for adjusting faulty symbol reactions from the known elements of many sciences. They have given us what amounts to a new approach to all social science. Edwin Green in *General Semantics, a New Tool for the Trade* and Howard C. Mayer in *A Semantics Approach to Public Relations*,<sup>2</sup> presented some of the practical aspects of general semantics for public relations work.

Whatever the message or whatever the audience in a public relations campaign may be, the purpose is always to convey factual information, a specific idea (a mental image) or a sentiment by the proper selection of symbols. The many techniques and psychological devices

used in modern public relations aim only at manipulation of symbols. The stereotypes of public opinion are the result. How are stereotypes developed? How can we modify them? How do we replace them by new stereotypes? When we know the answers to these questions, we will learn how to use the tools of public relations, of mass persuasion, and of education more efficiently. Without such knowledge, all our techniques and devices are but empty shells. The primitive medicine man practiced the arts of healing long before modern science gave us a better understanding of human nature. Man has practiced public relations since the dawn of history. Modern knowledge of the working of the human mind will put the techniques of leadership on a realistic basis.

### The Symbols in Communications

There are verbal and non-verbal symbols that convey information and/or sentiment. Men communicate with each other through symbols that carry a "stereotype" meaning. The dictionary defines a symbol as "something that stands for something else." In our minds the symbol is identified with the "thing" for which it stands. All symbols in varying degrees convey information and emotion. Our interpretation of communicated symbols depends on our conditioning. A Japanese soldier and an American citizen will react quite differently, intellectually and emotionally, to the "Star Spangled Banner," the Statue of Liberty, the picture of the Mikado, or the Japanese national anthem. Other non-verbal symbols, such as religious ceremonies, tribal dances, and the goose-stepping of Prussian soldiers, may appear entirely meaningless, if not ridiculous, to those conditioned to a different way of life. Even in oral-verbal communications, the acceptance of and the stereotype reaction to a symbol frequently have nothing

<sup>1</sup> As defined by Hayakawa.

<sup>2</sup> *Public Relations Directory and Yearbook*, 1945-46.

to do with the rational contents of language.

Language produces emotional reactions in the conditioned mind, even if the audience has no possible knowledge of its contents. That is not limited to the mumbo-jumbo incantations of the primitive sorcerer! In many religious services the minister uses language that his flock does not understand. Yet the priest's Latin, Greek, Slavonic or Hebrew prayers convey the emotional meaning that they are intended to communicate to an eager audience. They are religious symbols and convey a message.

### Conditioning Factors

Familiarity with the generally-accepted "meaning" of a symbol makes it convey similar thoughts (associations of ideas) to the people in an audience. By using an acoustic symbol (e.g., the word democracy) or a visual symbol (e.g., the picture of the Statue of Liberty), we can convey uniform ideas to all the members of a given group, provided the symbol has a similar meaning to all of them. Opinion leaders and educators are conditioning factors just as responsible for an individual's symbol reactions, as his environment.

Professor Pavlov, the great Russian scientist, was the first to study conditioned reflexes in animals. In his famous experiment with dogs he conditioned them to expect food when they heard a bell by ringing the bell whenever they were shown and given food. After a while, the dogs' salivary glands reacted to the sound of the bell alone, even though no food was available.

We do not want to enter into a discussion on whether or not there is a basic difference or no difference between animal "signal reactions" and human "symbol reactions." From the day of his birth man is subject to a training not unlike the conditioning of Pavlov's dogs.

This training begins on an entirely non-verbal level and rests on automatic reactions. We believe that the acts of the adult human being are guided by intelligence and reason. For many centuries mankind has assumed that it is destined to be led by the power of reason. As scientists, we must look at the world as it is and not as we would like it to be.

Throughout human history, pure, unadulterated, illogical emotion has led nations into war and civil strife and is still as powerful as ever before. In reality, the antithesis of emotion and reason is only a hypothetical construction. In life, there are elements of both in all human motivation. There is no way of eliminating emotion as a factor determining human behavior.

Most words and other symbols carry an emotional connotation. They are loaded. Their emotional value depends on the specific conditioning of an audience. A southern white democrat, for instance, reacts to the word-symbol, "white supremacy," in a typical, affirmative way. The southern Negro, or any intelligent American Negro for that matter, will respond to the same symbol in just the opposite way.

### Total Personality Reacts

Our symbol reactions do not happen only in our brains. Our total personality — our total psychosomatic apparatus — reacts. We respond to words and symbols with joy or with fear, with physical pain or with euphoric elation. We shed tears or we dance jubilantly in automatic symbol reactions.

Words and symbols are realities. They are not just obedient tools of man. Beyond their function in communications, they gain independent life. We know the symbol is not the thing. Yet man acts as if the symbol were the real thing. Korzybski coined the phrase "the map is not

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# AN IMPORTANT STORY — *and Another Way of Telling It*

By FRED R. JOLLY

Assistant Director of Community Relations, Caterpillar Tractor Co., Peoria, Illinois

**I**F YOU ARE IN BUSINESS you need friends—either to buy your wares or to consider you a worthwhile asset in the community. Long shelves of books have been written on how friends are made, and the way companies do it are as varied as the products of their plants.

Every company approaches its problems in a different way since no set of rules can fit all needs. It may be, however, that the experience of Caterpillar Tractor Company in Peoria, Illinois, in the field of plant visits will serve others who want to set up similar programs.

Frankly, those experiences are offered here with that hope in mind—that other companies will be encouraged to establish such programs. For if others develop friends for industry in their neighborhoods and we do it in ours, maybe we will get a lot of folks to understand that the well-being of this nation is tied inseparably with the well-being of its businesses. Both can enjoy prosperity together, neither alone.

There has been much talk of late about industry's open house. And good talk it is, for if there is any story which needs telling it is the one "what makes business tick?" The point is, are we doing enough open house work? If open house is a good idea once in a while, why isn't it even better to conduct open house on a continuing basis?

That's nothing new, of course. Many companies have been taking folks through their plants for years. They have been telling folks about the tremendous quantities of nuts and bolts they use, the hundreds of acres over which their plants spread, the millions

of gallons of water, the miles of inter-plant railroad they have and, worst of all, they have been pouring all this information into the eager visitor's ear at a rate of 5000 words to the mile while maintaining a double-time pace through the plant.

Even this "howdy-whi-s-s-h-t-thanks-for-coming-in" attitude has done a certain amount of good and even made a few friends for industry. If it had not, many plant managers would have forgotten it long ago. But think what progress can be made by industry if genuine, thoughtful attention is given to the visitor. Surely few people will argue that industry needs friends. And some of those who have thought the problem through maintain that there is not a better way to make friends than to get them to know you. The best way to do that, they say, is to get acquainted with them one at a time. The next best way is two at a time—and you take it from there.

This much we may as well admit. Business and industry needs friends to counteract the sly, slow poison which Communism's antifree enterprisers are injecting into our national blood-stream. The privately-owned, competitive way of doing business has brought this country to greatness, by making available more things for more people. You know it. I know it. But many folks only know what they are told—and they are being told that state control will do even more for them than private ownership. So, unless we want statism to come into flower, we must do something.

Caterpillar's Plant Escort Service—a far better name than guide service in

our opinion—is all that its name implies. It is a service department, designed to provide plant trips for customers, prospects, and visitors to other departments in the Company—and to employees, their families and neighbors.

### The Way It Works

The section is set up on a permanent basis, a supervisor of long and sound experience, having been selected to head it. Plant Escorts are all young men, carefully picked for the jobs. Because the Plant Escort Service offers an unequalled opportunity to learn, only the most promising young men are accepted. In addition to learning plant, products and customers, they learn how to get along with people, a priceless possession any time. Time has already proved the wisdom of this careful selection. Young men who started with the Service have already been requested for jobs of even more responsibility.

Escorts are carefully trained, not alone in the technical aspects of plant and products, but in the every-day points of interest. They know and use such information as the statistics mentioned earlier. But they are given fundamental training in the economics of industry and when they say, "Here is a machine which makes it possible to make ten times as many parts as a man could do with hand tools," they also say, "It makes the operator's work easier and he gets paid many times what he would if the parts had to be made by hand."

There are many other things he knows about the plant, too. He knows, for example, what many machine tools cost and who put up the money to buy them. He knows that the owner of tools is entitled to a fair return on his invested savings. And he uses this, and a great deal of other information, as he sees fit. He does not learn his story word by word and then at the proper place

"speak his piece." He tells it in his own words, having learned it through countless trips with his supervisor, study of available printed material, trips by himself and through every other sensible channel. He is sincere, friendly, interested and patient, because he was selected for those virtues.

But, try as he does, he cannot do the impossible. He can show visitors many things and he can tell them much in the plant, but he cannot be an expert in the field of industrial economics and, thus, he cannot give visitors the broad general picture which we have come to feel so important.

We attempt to answer correctly all questions asked by visitors, whatever their nature, for we think they want to know whether or not we are serving them efficiently. They want to know that we are giving them what they want at a price they feel is right.

### Presentation By Film

Well, we want to tell them. And we have found one way to do it. We have just produced a sound-color slide presentation which answers some questions we know they want answered and shows them some things they might not have considered.

Briefly, the two-by-two inch Kodachrome slides illustrate a recorded talk which welcomes visitors, saying that we want them to enjoy their visit and so we are going to tell them about a few things they will see and a few they will not see. We show them a part of the color-conditioned plant (it is painted in pastel shades throughout), we show them machine tools and tell them what a fixture is and what it contributes to mass-production and, so, to their higher living standard.

The slides and talk cover the fine training and apprentice courses, the

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# PRESS CONFERENCE PRESCRIPTION

By WILLIAM T. BOSTELMAN

News Editor, AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRIES, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THE DAILY CRIST flooding an editor's desk often includes the usual invitation to a press conference, or preview of a new product, or introduction to a familiar personality. Like the policeman helping himself to a shiny apple at Tony's fruit stand, this is regarded by most members of the press as legitimate graft: a reward for being a member of the Fourth Estate. The real intent of a conference, the disclosure of news, is lost in a welter of bourbon and *bonhomie*. Or let me be fair, at least the newsgathering atmosphere is beclouded. The preview resolves itself into the distribution of a packaged handout of releases and pictures which are usually mailed to the editorial desk anyway.

What I am getting at is this: Why not make it a real conference instead of a buttered-up star-spangled clambake? A few examples, doctor:

One of the nation's well-known practitioners of public relations furnishes us with a typical case example, not an isolated or particularly dramatic instance. The invitation was contained in a mimeographed letter (it could have been engraved, and sometimes is) addressed—and here is the cardinal fault—not to any one person, but merely to the "Editor." Sometimes the bid is mailed to a long since departed member of the staff, and this always creates a warm feeling. Often it is very poorly addressed, merely to the publication so that the advertising or space salesmen receive it. This affair was held in one of New York's plushiest hostelrys. However, no attempt was made to identify the person going into the conference against a list of invited working pressmen by any

one of six vacuous beauties sitting behind a table, obviously recruited from the publicist's staff, and mighty unhappy about the whole thing. Doesn't public relations begin at home? However, even this was an improvement over the many conferences in which the newsman wanders in like a lost soul looking for someone he can hoarsely buttonhole.

Perhaps a philosophical truth makes itself evident here. Perhaps the publicity people regard the thing as a farcical graft: they are Tony winking their collective eyes as the editor makes off with the applejack instead of the apple.

But getting back. After wandering about in the usual frenetic milieu looking for a friendly knowing face, the newsman approaches a seemingly authoritative gentleman. After exchanging pleasantries, the newsman asks the authoratative gentleman a question and the man recoils. Oh, no!—he's a *dealer!!*

The red light flashes, and tilt shows. Another violation is making the press conference a jolly jumbo affair for salespeople, dealers, Aunt Minnie, right on down the line. Editors and reporters are there for one purpose, to get news: news about a product or from a personality. The dealer is there to be informed, indoctrinated, to be hippped up. When the President is interviewed by Washington correspondents, the national chairman of his party does not pass out campaign buttons.

Of course, all of this can be easily obviated. Although it may seem like a technique employed at the fraternity pledge dance, a tag or badge system would work wonders. It would simplify



introductions, and immediately establish the individual's relationship: press or staff.

### Further Errors

Back to our case example. Things began to get a bit worse. A few of the publicist's strong-arm staff appeared and verbally bullwhipped the protesting mass of humanity, amid drunken shouts and murmurs, into a small theatre. The head of the company whose product was being previewed got up and made a long rambling inaudible speech. The velvet curtains parted. The baby yellow spot beamed and the product was unveiled. Then, oh, no! Now came a dramatic sketch, neither written by Hecht & MacArthur nor acted by Lunt and Fontaine, which introduced the product in a Christmasy atmosphere. The then weak and groggy newsman was handed press packages containing the works: speech, pictures, description. A duplicate set was on the editorial news desk at the same time. No opportunity was provided to talk to the top man who was surrounded and besieged by dealers and salespeople.

Some idea of confusion galore in an unplanned press conference is the case of a prominent manufacturer who held a press preview of his new models in New York recently. Presenting myself, I could find no public relations representative of the company. However, there were several newspaper friends present and we began a jolly reminiscence among ourselves. Making a determined effort to at least find the man who had invited me, I drifted away and collared one of the young ladies present who said that she could not locate that chap, but would I like to meet the public relations director of the company. Of course! Back to the smoke-filled room, and there she introduced me to a man who had been at my elbow, who

was most gracious. My friends, all representing large metropolitan dailies, started slightly, and I in turn introduced the public relations director to them. It might well have been that they would never have met.

Why all this hoopla? Why not a simple interview and presentation in a small room? Usher the boys in and let them ask questions. This in fact is done—although all too infrequently. One of the colorful principals of a particular firm made a trip to Philadelphia recently. His public relations man telephoned a dozen local correspondents and said that an informal press conference would be held. The conference was held in a local hotel room. It was strictly question and answer, and solid news was obtained clearing up questions about the company's policies and future plans.

There are good press conferences, of course. One the writer attended was conducted for a group of manufacturers by a local public relations firm. Badges and press packages were handed out by the young ladies at the door who checked off the visiting pressmen. The exhibits were well staffed and a cameraman was available to take any pictures required.

### Some Suggestions

The thing resolves itself to some very simple rules: Doctor, the prescription:

1. No reporter or editor is going to give you free space just because you buy him a flock of drinks. Have some solid news to give him. Drinks by all means, too, but do not let them be a substitute.
2. Invite a "man" by name, and then check him off against a list at the door. Have a competent member of your staff, right there, to meet him, and he will not object to a small identifying pin.
3. Give him your packaged press material then. Do not hold out. But at

- least give a little thought and care to its preparation. Give it a different slant and include different pictures than the ones then flooding the mail.
4. Have a cameraman and models available for photographs.
  5. Keep the group clear of dealers and salespeople, unless, and this has a capital "U", they have been briefed and, in effect, operate as auxiliary members of the publicist's staff; otherwise, keep them out.
  6. Do not bother with dramatic skits,

frills and furbelows. Let the product be prominently displayed, and have a technically knowledgeable person right there to answer questions.

7. If a company personality is to be interviewed, have him available, comfortably seated in an adjoining room away from the hubbub, with a staff public relations man present to introduce him to newsmen. Of course, if this interview is held as a special event, the hotel room method as described before might be used.

## PR on the Lighter Side

(Continued from Page 2)

amentally appealing that editors and commentators immediately recognize its unusual qualities.

One serious pitfall of the humorous technique is the temptation to hoax an editor. Such a misstep can be fatal. A publicist indulging in whimsy or fantasy on behalf of a client, must take the editor into his confidence. It is the publicist's duty to so manage the situation that the editor is not left holding the bag and the newspaper's switchboard does not buzz for days with calls of complaint and indignation.

Another note of warning, the humor of a story must be integrally related to the client's product or service and must always be in good taste. You don't mix publicity efforts on behalf of an expensive wrist watch with a fashion show for midgets; you don't allow an opera star to push peanuts across the floor with her nose. Both these ideas may be thought funny in some circles, but they are irrelevant for your purpose.

In direct contrast, for the National Pretzel Bakers Institute, we staged a one-day school for pretzel benders. Pretzel veterans taught novices how to twist the salted strands of dough into traditional shapes. Newspaper and magazine editors and newsreel men were so delighted we followed up some time later with a contest for pretzel benders. We awarded prizes to the fastest operators—first eliminating all double jointed contenders.

Here the humor grew logically out of the product. The humorous approach was not a substitute for established publicity procedures. It was a supplementary device to secure for a client many columns of favorable copy and photographs that would have been unobtainable except for the tongue-in-cheek techniques.

Perhaps it may pay you well in good will and dollars to re-evaluate your clients for their light touch possibilities.

# THE WEATHERVANE

By  
GEORGE DICKSON SKINNER

## RECRUITING NOTICE

COLUMBUS discovered America, but he never knew much about it. After four and a half centuries, we still haven't got the place completely mapped. The significance of America in the world today is chiefly the work of the men who made the United States — not only the famed Founding Fathers, but the buck privates of the Continental Army, the log-cabin pioneers, the members of the State and Territorial governments who pushed the American ideal along with the frontier and sent it back fresh from the frontier to Congress.

Public relations will be a pioneer field for a long time to come. Like the young United States, it will grow to power by the vitality of its organization and the initiative and loyalty of the individual men and women in it.

Its organization is the Public Relations Society of America. Like the Continental Congress and Army, the Society represents a new idea and a new force that holds great promise for the country. Like them, also, it needs recruits.

### —With Reservations

The recruiting job for the Society, however, is very different from that of 1776. In the first place, it has to be highly selective. We don't want every man who can finger the triggers of a typewriter. We say, "My friend, we want you to join up — but you've first got to prove you're a reasonably good and experienced campaigner."

For the Society, that selective recruit-

ing is essential. Without it, we should get an organization that would be incapable of reaching its goals. It means, however, that no small group of members can do the recruiting job. No committee knows enough qualified non-members to fill up the ranks as they ought to be filled, nor can the members of any committee find all qualified recruits in their spare time.

*Building the PRSA membership is the personal responsibility of every member.*

### The Missionary Job

No argument ought to be needed to convince the members of that responsibility. We have all seen the potentialities of the Society. Otherwise, we would not be members. It must be obvious that the potentialities can be realized only if the Society is built to full strength — in other words, to the point where it is in fact the organized body of the public relations profession in the United States and Canada.

There is an easy tendency to leave it to the officers and the committees to do the job. In an old, established professional society, there is reason for the attitude. Operations are routine; newcomers join almost automatically, replacing others lost by retirement; functions are regulatory or devoted to matters of broad policy. Individual members may be more or less active, as they please, without much consequence to the organization.

But the Public Relations Society of America today cannot be just a regulatory professional body. It has got to be first of all a missionary body. It is carrying the banner of a new idea just as truly as the Continental Army did. That is what the members want it to do. That is why they organized it and joined it.

In that kind of party, every member has to be a party worker or lose some of the value he saw in joining.

### Pattern for Growth

Do you know a public relations man who meets the requirements but isn't a member? Tell him what the Society is and why you joined. Take him to a luncheon meeting and get his name on an application blank.

If you're not sure whether he meets the requirements of the by-laws, take

the trouble to learn before you ask him to fill out a blank. It saves embarrassment for him, for you and for your Membership Committee.

Your Committee cannot and should not do the whole job for your Chapter. The work of screening and processing applications takes about as much time as the average committee member can afford — much more time, certainly, than the average Chapter member gives to the Society.

But that's not the most important reason why every member should regard himself as a recruiting officer. The field is new — the Society is young. This is the time of growth for the public relations profession, and the body that represents it needs the active help of each man and woman now a member or qualified to be a member.

## An Important Story

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safety of the plant, the transportation system, the foundry, and many other things visitors will see. But, the presentation does much more than that. It tells of the invisible man in the plant, the man who stands at the elbow of each employee, the fellow who provided the thousands of dollars worth of tools which make his job possible.

The story includes a slide or two on that important guy, the real boss—the customer, who really decides what we shall build and how much of it. Considerable emphasis is placed on the employees visitors will see. "But even more important than the *things* you will see," says the speaker, "will be the *people* you will see . . . We can and do have fine machines, good buildings and excellent materials, yet proper use of all these calls for people who have skills

and know-how and will put these talents and abilities to work."

One of the most important points made in the presentation is the importance of the Company to its community. The \$84 million put into circulation in the area last year is pictured and described. Visitors are told of the \$71 million in wages and the \$13 million in local purchases; and profits, where they come from, where they go and the reasons they mean prosperity to a community and a nation.

People must know the truth if they are to give support to private enterprise—if they are to indicate a preference at the polls for those who believe in the soundness of our way against the ways of state-controlled countries.

At Caterpillar, we think we may have found one small way to add to the knowledge of visitors, a few at a time.

# A Family Affair

By NEVIN J. RODES

R. B. Howard & Associates, Inc., Columbus, Ohio

UNIQUE, IN MANY WAYS, as a community relations project, was the recent Open House staged by the Columbus Bolt & Forging Company, Columbus, Ohio. Well planned and efficiently conducted, the tour left little to be desired in accomplishing its purpose of acquainting employees, their families and their friends with the operations of the company as well as giving all the workers—office and shop—a feeling of greater pride in their company.

Beginning its regular and special meetings months ahead of the actual tour date, a representative committee laid the plans for the important event. One of the first decisions made by the committee and management was that there should be a complete shut-down of the plant on the day of the Open House, except at the demonstration operations, in order to enable all workers to participate as hosts. However, a policy of the planners which was early established and strictly adhered to was that in no instance would employees be compelled to attend. The fine response was attributed to the enthusiasm build-up done by supervision and interested workers, coupled with the very unselfish attitude of top management.

Knowledge of the coming event was spread through the plant by means of the grapevine in order to allow everyone employed there to become curious about the day as well as to let them feel that they were in on it from the start and that it was to be their party. Teaser announcements were displayed on bulletin boards and an attractive gate poster—decorated with a fetching Petty Girl

—built up the factory workers' interest in their big "date".

Once the general plans were laid by the committee, responsibilities were delegated to larger groups who were instructed to proceed as they saw fit. While several of the committee had supervision of some specific projects, the committee as a whole acted generally as an overall guide in developing the entire program.

The sales department was called upon to take care of the displays of the company's many products *en masse* and in use on various consumer goods. The Employees Club boosted a Hobby Show that proved to be one of the main attractions of the Open House. The fire brigade displayed their tools and equipment. The personnel department demonstrated an efficient system of records and the boys manning the lift trucks took great delight in showing their skills.

Innumerable scenes observed during the day could well lead into a narrative of the Open House. During the morning a little girl was observed busily drawing pictures on her father's drafting board in the production department. The son of the president stood for hours in pure amazement at the sight of the giant drop forge in operation. Throughout the plant men would proudly introduce wives, children and sweethearts to their buddies and boastfully tell of their job in their company. Many workers were surprised to see the many things their company actually made and the consumer goods in which they found their places.

Yes, many hundreds of such scenes illustrated the success of the tour from

the "Bolt Works Family" standpoint. Many fine letters of approval received by the company from visiting executives and civic groups testified to the day's success from the outsider's viewpoint.

### To Quote . . .

Typical of the comments and description of the day was the following statement published by Delmar Starkey, general manager of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, in his weekly bulletin—*Pickups*: "We attend a lot of 'open houses' and all of them are very interesting. Some of them are different, like the one at the Columbus Bolt & Forging Company on a recent Saturday morning. The employees, their families, members of the Foremen's Club, ministers, teachers, newspapermen and a few other special business friends were invited." (Business representatives of the plant's one industrial labor unit and two craft units were also invited to attend the event).

"You started in at the Chestnut Street entrance and without a guide followed arrows through and around, and up and down the stairways throughout the various buildings. You could take as much time at a machine operation as you liked, and hurry past others that did not interest you. We were particularly impressed with the number of wives with little children hovering about Daddy's machine, watching him demonstrate.

"This company is largely automotive, making bolts and nuts for many of the automobile manufacturers. Farm machinery is another big outlet for their products.

"Bob Rex, Bill Carlile, Ray Speer, Royce Call, Bob Darragh and the rest of the executive family were on hand mixing with everybody, seeing that they had a good time at the buffet lunch which was a popular spot at the end of the tour. We appreciated the souvenir

the visitors were given, namely, a pair of kitchen shears, the forgings for which were made in the plant."

The start of the tour, as Mr. Starkey stated, was at the plant personnel department where everyone was given a printed form entitled "Explanation of Example Operations and Equipment". All employees were tagged with a large badge on which they displayed their name and which designated them as hosts. They had been instructed to act as hosts to all visitors and informally see to it that everyone was well informed and enjoying the trip. This was accomplished exceptionally well, making the lack of an official tour guide for small parties of tourists not felt in the least.

The strategic placement of arrows on floors, walls and doors accomplished marvels in routing complete strangers through the plant without a hitch. At certain points of potential danger or of particular interest, employees were stationed to make sure everyone got along all right.

### The Set Up

After registering and receiving the printed explanation of the twenty some machines in operation, all visitors were on their own. Each operating machine was labeled with a huge sign to which was attached, when practicable, a before and after sample of the piece produced by that machine. The name of the operation on the poster corresponded with the name on the explanation sheet, on which could be read the production capacity of that machine, its current value and a brief description of its performance.

Where the chief operation of the machine was hidden, ingenious mirrors, rigged by the operators, enabled everyone safely to see what went on inside the machine. Illustrative of the thought given the tour plans was the prepara-

tion of peep holes on a shield surrounding a welding operation. These were made of glare-proof glass and cut at various heights, including ones for the children. These were appropriately labeled "For Wee Ones" and "For Wee-Wee Ones". Wherever danger from sparks or flying objects was present, giant plastic screens were constructed permitting free vision with freedom from possible injury.

Recognition of workers was a noticeable feature of the tour. All foremen and supervisory personnel were given distinctive, business-like coats to wear, which will be their attire from now on at the plant. On the desks of all office workers were the names of their occupants. Even in the plant the men and women had tagged their own machines, benches and desks with their names, some going so far as to display their tools in neat order. Several die-makers took great pleasure in explaining their work to countless inquisitors.

### Hobby Show

Upon nearing the end of the tour the visitors were guided through a corridor in which there was considerable hubbub. Further investigation proved this to be the location of a most interesting Hobby Show, which had overflowed its anticipated size and numbered some thirty entries ranging from home-made pies to odd guns. At the entrance to the show a congenial hostess distributed ballots to all visitors and carefully explained the plan of voting. At this point the tour was slowed down somewhat, but for very legitimate reasons. Here employees saw for the first time the handiwork of their fellow workers, and outsiders saw the extent to which the company encourages workers to engage in some worthwhile extra-curricular activity. Choice of a winner was very difficult to determine, but high interest

in the show, which could have been bypassed by anyone so desiring, was attested to by the fact that out of 1297 registered tourists and hosts who braved a heavy rainstorm, 1176 voted for a winner. All prizes came from the treasury of the Employees Club.

### Products Displayed

The last stop in the tour was in a large room in which a novel display of products was presented. There, the visitors were able to enjoy fellowship and refreshments while looking at brand new automobiles upended so as to show their undersides. From sample products laying on a cloth below the machine, ribbons ran to the part of the car in which those products were used while spotlights played on this rarely seen side of an auto. Fire and safety equipment was on display and panels along the wall showed finished and polished products made from various forgings produced in the plant.

Upon leaving, each visitor was handed a folder telling the story of the plant's long history and a good looking box containing a kitchen tool that could do everything but talk. Inside the box was a card on which were these words: "Today, during your trip through our plants, you witnessed the production of drop hammer forgings. The part you saw being forged is the rough forging from which the souvenir kitchen shear, contained in this box, is made.

"Drop forgings are used extensively in nearly every line of manufacturing business when uniformity and exceptional strength are important considerations in the safe and efficient operation of equipment. Some of the more prominent users of drop forgings are the automotive industry, mining and conveying equipment manufacturers, makers of hand tools and the agricultural implement manufacturers.



"The production of quality drop forgings, bolts, nuts, rods and special upsets to meet the exacting requirements of industry is our every-day business—we like it and we hope you enjoyed seeing how we do it."

### History of Company Told

The folder told of how in 1852 a small group of men experienced in hand production of bolts and nuts organized a business known as the Columbus Bolt Works. As the demand for carriages and wagons increased they expanded the business to produce other vehicle parts. As would be expected the company, "with tongue in cheek", began to do work for the horseless carriage builders around the turn of the century. For some thirty years John Robinson Poste and his son were actively at the head of the concern, but in 1947 their interests in the company were turned over to several close business associates, now comprising the current management team. The comparative youth of these men is a compliment to their ability—none of them being over fifty. At that time the present name of the company was adopted.

According to the folder the company hires a thousand workers and produces as many as 3,000 separate parts during the course of a year. The folder's writer and signer, Robert M. Rex, president, attributes much to the family of employees for the success of the company in his closing paragraphs of the folder: "The success of any industrial enterprise," he states, "is largely dependent upon the caliber of the employees who comprise the working organization. Columbus Bolt & Forging Co. employs approximately 1,000 men and women, all

of whom are loyal and enthusiastic in their desire to help insure the continued success of the business. In order to successfully operate the business, many and varied skills are required of these people and, as in most businesses, some unskilled people are also necessary to carry out certain duties. All of these people working together and cooperating with each other in their daily work, comprise a production team that has built an enviable record that, for 97 years, has stood the test of time. The Company has maintained a fine reputation of supplying a quality product at the right price and on time and, looking at the future, such cooperation as has existed for 97 years will assure maintaining that reputation for many years to come.

### It Is the Story of the American Way

"The story of our Company is no different from that of thousands and thousands of other businesses, small, medium and large. It is the story of the development of these United States under our American way of life in this great land of ours. We are proud of the record, which is second to none in the world, made by our Country and its people, and we are particularly proud of the part the 'Bolt Works Family' played in helping to establish this record."

There can be no doubt but that the plant community in which this company lives and operates is one of its staunchest boosters. These neighbors feel that the company is a friend in their midst, it being the employer of many of its citizens, contributor to its many civic projects, and a strong advocate of the American system of free enterprise.

*They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.*

—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

## Sorcerer's Apprentice

(Continued from Page 17)

the territory." Rationally, we can understand that. But in dealing with man in a crowd, we must accept the existing confusion of the name with the thing for which it stands.

"It is an accepted principle of magic among modern barbarians as among the literate people of the antiquity that the name of a thing is mystically equivalent of the thing itself; in Sumerian mythology the gods create a thing when they pronounce its name. Hence to the magician to know a thing's name is to have power over it; is — in other words — to know its nature."<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the hopes of those among us who expect to change human nature, man will always react to symbols as if they were the real things. Depending on their symbol education, they will rejoice in the verbal constructions of a communist order in Russia, of democracy in Turkey, or of social justice in Great Britain without any attempt to examine the "territory" indicated by the "map."

### Modern Magic

In its unrealistic appraisal of the world the primitive mind indulges in "two-valued thinking." Things are either good or bad, either black or white. The public relations objective is the establishment of a subject as a white, a good, a godly thing. In public relations we seek to identify a cause, an institution, or a person, with, and as, a "good" symbol. He who masters the art of creating identification does indeed practice modern magic. Stuart Chase spoke of the tyranny of words. In underlining the importance of symbols in communications

no better witness can be found than Benjamin Franklin. In one of his reports from Paris to the Pennsylvania Assembly, he presented convincingly the functions of public relations in identifying a cause. He defined his objective as:

"Removing the prejudices that art and accident have spread among the people of the country against us and obtaining for us the good opinion of the bulk of mankind without doors."

### The Mechanism of Identification

It would be fairly easy to propound a theory of public behavior patterned on some of the psychoanalytical schools. By creating fancy names for some of the typical causations of public opinion we would arrive at a mythology of anthropomorphic forces, drives and conflict patterns. But the trouble with creating new labels for a complicated multitude of motivating factors is that this procedure does not really explain anything. The verbal products of this method merely add to our vocabulary without improving our understanding. We gain nothing by using phrases such as "class struggle," "mass fury," or "over-compensation of a national inferiority complex" unless we understand the multiple motivations of the individual in his group.

The study of semantics opens the door to such an understanding. Today we are at the beginning of a new era of social sciences which may some day permit us to predict mass behavior with greater precision. Knowledge of the dynamics of social life reduces the element of chance in public relations planning. Already we can see where this novel approach will lead us. Man changes under the impact of training in society and under the influence of communications. He is affected by the changing meaning of sym-

<sup>1</sup> Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History*, Pelican, 1946, p. 128.

bols in a constantly changing world. Only yesterday interpreters of our social life thought they had explained these changes whenever they created a new name for a complex phenomenon.

### Scales of Value Vary

The identification of an object, of an idea, of an institution, of people, etc., is just such a complicated phenomenon. Identification is not constant, it is not permanent, and it does not have general validity. We know that there are many scales of values that different people apply to the world around them. But it is not only the conception of what is good or bad that varies. One person will change his opinions, preferences and aversions during his lifetime. The fiction of the economic man rests on the erroneous assumption that all people at least have similar scales of value. Many economists base their theories on the fiction that man's incentives are identical. For instance, they assume that the desire to preserve one's life is common to all men. A glance at primitive or other cultures, or at our own history indicates the futility of any theory assuming standardized economic motivations. "Modern" psychologists have created names for more than six thousand different drives or instincts motivating man.<sup>1</sup> But these verbalisms do no more than interpret the fictions of economic theorists; they explain social action in terms of economic motivations exclusively. In our time, most men have been trained to identify the symbol, money, with many desirable commodities and services. Yet in spite of the high priority of this symbol on the scale of values of most people (even social scientists) we have no right to overlook the non-identity of

value sequence even among people with similar ideas of value.

Even with our limited knowledge of social technique we change identifications of values. We apply non-materialistic value identifications, substituting them frequently for "economic advantage." Communist Russia supposedly practicing the pure Marxian dogma, can not avoid using non-economic incentives. Russia frequently rewards her heroes with titles and medals that have no material value, but only typical emotional, virtue identification. An economic, materialistic explanation of the heroism of a Christian martyr, the suicide of a Kamikadze flyer, or the gallantry of a soldier in a modern army can be achieved only by straining metaphors into mythological distortions. Nor will any other general simplification give a satisfactory explanation. All rational and seemingly irrational "idealistic" action reflects the conditioning of man by symbols. We must study the process of conditioning if we want to know what goes on inside a human being and what causes him to approve or reject the things around him.

### Involuntary Hypnotism

Do we react equally to non-verbal and verbal communications? We know that little children, and sometimes adults, too, imitate the facial expressions of others. We can observe people listening to a speaker with such intense concentration that their lip movements repeat inaudibly all his words. Are there degrees of involuntary hypnotism? We have all observed the frenzy of people attending a ball game or a race. The worship of screen stars or political leaders indicates how little we have progressed from the social pattern of primitive tribes. The not infrequent riots in our cities indicate the same thing. We know how the medicine man puts his

<sup>1</sup> L. L. Bernard, quoted by S. S. Sargent, *Basic Teachings of the Great Psychologists*, New Home Library, 1945, p. 114.

audience in a state of trance by such means as rhythmic drum-beating and monotonous incantations. We have seen the dwindling of audience criticism and resistance under the influence of modern versions of ancient devices, from community singing, folk dancing, and jam sessions to rhythmic marching, ceremonial performances, "secret societies" and present day cults.

What makes people identify themselves with each other? The mystical communion with the group and the simultaneous reduction of the reasoning and critical powers is known to students of anthropology. Modern molders of public opinion will give top priority to the problem of group genesis and emotional identification of the individual with a group.

### "Seepage"

Will general semantics help create a better understanding of this and similarly important aspects of social inter-relations? Will the study of symbol reactions shed light on the importance of imitation in human groups? We know that patterns of fashion, of mores and of thinking are transferred from a leadership group to "lower" social strata. In more conservative groups, e.g., in European populations, we have observed a process for which German sociologists have coined the terms, "GESUNKENES KULTUR GUT." Translated, this would be "cultural seepage." We know that the peasants' costumes in some remote valleys of the Austrian Alps are nothing but copies of the clothes of the ruling classes of 400 years ago. Here in America, only poor people on a "low" social level snuff tobacco. Yet a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art with its collection of diamond studded snuff boxes will soon convince us that the habit of taking snuff was a custom of the rich not so very long ago. More than

just the identification of fashion as the thing to do and wear seeps down from the leader group to the crowd. Fashions of thinking, too, are subject to this process of "seepage." Bernays built his leadership principle for public relations on similar observations. Does this principle offer a practical working hypothesis under all circumstances? Some very strong political labor parties, especially in Europe, still base their economic and social theories on Darwin, Bachofen van Echt and even Rousseau. They worship scientific hypotheses that have long been discarded by the very groups which originated them over a hundred years ago. Yet there are difficulties in the practical applications of the leadership theory because frequently the public fails to follow the established groups of opinion leaders. The value identification of the masses in what we call grassroot movements, follows anonymous leader groups. It is not the teachers, economically important community members, ministers, professionals or even union leaders who have been responsible for race riots in Detroit or Harlem. We don't yet know enough about the process that makes the masses discard established leaders and accept others.

### Symbols Created to Man's Image

Man creates his symbols in his own image. He equips the words he uses with anthropomorphic qualities. In naming the social institutions, we equip them with life-like features and see them as man-like realities. The "science" of law offers us a good example in the theories on non-physical persons in the legal sense. We all know a stock corporation is not a real life person, but we ascribe to it many qualities that only a human being can really possess. The same process in our thinking makes us identify the state, the group, the political party

with human features. We have followed our two-valued polar way of thinking in creating devils and angels in the image of man. Similarly, today, we create modern devils and angels by equipping whole groups of people with virtues or negative qualities. The loaded words — cartel — big business — commies — Negro — are examples of such animistic symbols. It is an established habit of symbol use that most of the creations of our fictitious world of group entities abstract entirely from reality. We live in a world of stereotype images no less fabulous than the mythological Olympus

and Hades of the ancients. The genesis and the metamorphosis of stereotypes appear in a new light to the student of general semantics.

There are many more problems deserving the attention of the engineers of public opinion. The application of semantics is not a universal recipe for all who need the answer to an immediate practical problem of opinion molding. But a serious attempt to apply the findings of general semantics to the problems of public relations will contribute to our ability to achieve intelligent public relations planning.

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## A Good Community Relations Program

(Continued from Page 8)

profession, are we prepared for this challenge. Leaders in business and industry must assume leadership in studying this problem in their communities and giving their utmost support to steps leading to a sound solution. Here again this will be time-consuming and continuing in its demands. But it is at least as important as any other phase of community relations in establishing and insuring the right understanding and the right climate for business and industrial development.

While any program of community relations must employ all available skills and must be friendly and persuasive, it is my very strong feeling that it should be sincere and factual in every respect. Anything that can be construed

as boasting or patting oneself on the back is apt to have a negative effect in the long pull. Simple, friendly approaches are much better than smart, sophisticated ones. While from time to time issues that are controversial must be attacked, wherever possible a public service program should work in those fields where there is broad and general agreement as to their desirability. Similarly, in so far as possible it is desirable to work with other leading elements of the community such as teachers, preachers, officials, leaders of labor and other prominent groups. Above all, there must be enthusiastic and continuous support of such a program by management if it is to reap the greatest rewards.

## Book Reviews

### BOTTOM-UP MANAGEMENT

Reviewed by Dr. William A. Nielander, Hofstra College, Hempstead, New York.

THIS BOOK will probably be regarded as one of the important contributions to public relations in the current year not because of a new and different approach to employee relations but because, in a very small amount of space, Mr. William B. Given has clearly and in simple and positive language developed a pragmatic philosophy of employee relations that will find wide acceptance. The methodology, application and procedures are very well developed. The major problem Mr. Given tackles is that of harnessing all the skills and "brain power" of an organization so that management and the worker attain maximum results. This is more than an excellent two-way system of communication which of course must be present. None of the prerogatives of management are given up: rather they are further intensified under Mr. Given's program. Intensified in the sense that every man in the organization must become an end and not a means; that decentralization of authority must be carried out to the extent of an organization's talent; that there is a practical way of recognizing the dignity of the individual worker in a democratic capitalistic system of enterprise.

It boils down to a system whose "heart and soul" is based upon teaching rather than telling. It is the type of teaching that provides both insight into the problems of the business system as well as faith. The right to fail must be ever present since lasting progress and understanding is built upon failure. There is nothing automatic in Mr. Given's proposals, nor is *Bottom-Up Management* a

"packaged" employee-management plan of operation. The successful operation of the ideas that Mr. Given expresses calls for the highest of management skills, patience and tact. Mr. Given's company, the American Brake Shoe Company, has not been without its labor difficulties which he acknowledges.

He believes that had management been more astute in the practice of "Bottom-Up" management, these difficulties would have been either eliminated or greatly reduced. There is no suggestion in his proposals that all friction can be eliminated. There is the indirect suggestion that friction be used as a force for progress rather than for destruction.

Mr. Given's comment on public relations is interesting. He regards his company as too small for a public relations department. Everyone in the organization is part of the "public relations department." This idea of Mr. Given's is probably based not on the dollar volume of Brake Shoe, which is substantial, but on the fact that they operate 56 relatively small plants in various parts of the United States.

The style is delightfully lucid and engaging. It is amazing how much material Mr. Given can pack into his short chapters. No chapter is longer than 9 pages. The entire book is only 171 pages including the appendix, of which part "A" alone is worth the price of the book. Part "A" is called "Management Yardsticks." It consists of a series of some of the best aphorisms, original and otherwise that the reviewer has read.

The book is a tribute to top management. Mr. Given is obviously a busy man, as are many other executives but he has taken time out to write a book that should help many other busy execu-



tives to find more time for themselves and to add to the progress being made in improving employee relations. The book lacks a little if anything in the way of structural design for a good employee relations program. It is to be hoped that Mr. Given will follow up this book with another in which he will give more details so that his philosophy can gain wider acceptance among those not too well versed in employee relations. The book is not a primer which is most fortunate. It is intended for those who are in "high places" and for those who have given a great deal of thought to the problem of employee relations. Every serious student will welcome the book. (BOTTOM-UP MANAGEMENT, by William B. Given, Harper & Brothers. 171 pp. + 1X — \$2.50.)

### BUSINESS-SPONSORED TEACHING AIDS

Reviewed by Virgil L. Rankin, Public Relations  
Consultant, Boston.

THOMAS J. SINCLAIR's newly published book on *Business-Sponsored Teaching Aids* is one crammed full of facts for the public relations worker properly concerned with the nature, purposes, and content of free and inexpensive materials for the classroom; how they are prepared, produced and distributed; their availability, actual use, and evaluation.

The author, with an inquiring mind and a combined educational and business background of his own, saw that a great deal of money and a large amount of energy were going into business-sponsored aids programs, and he began to wonder whether the results were satisfactory to those who produced such aids and to those who received them.

As manager of the School and College Service of the Association of American Railroads, Washington, D. C., and through personal acquaintance with

others holding similar jobs in other industries, he became convinced of the need for more accurate criteria in determining what types of business-sponsored aids were preferred for use in schools. Much, he found, had been written on the subject, but no comprehensive survey had been made of the field. This he determined to undertake. He set out to discover, as major objectives of his study, "what business is doing with its teaching aids programs, what educators, think of these programs, how the relationships between business and education can be improved, and what, if anything, can be done to provide better sponsored material."

First of all, Dr. Sinclair analyzes the over-all problem — which seemed to stem from the fact that "much of what business does with its sponsored aids program is based on assumptions." This was verified when he conferred with eight representatives of business in formulating a tentative list of problems for study. He sent this list to 100 leading business sponsors of teaching aids, asking their cooperation. On the basis of suggestions from 59 business representatives, three separate eight-page questionnaires — as nearly parallel as possible — were prepared for business, school administrators, and teachers. Those for educators were pre-tested in six states before being printed and mailed.

More than 60 per cent of 1,227 questionnaires were returned. They came from 289 classroom teachers representing all grade levels through high school, from 337 school administrators, and from 88 business organizations active in sponsoring free or inexpensive aids to instruction.

The data collected in this way — and through correspondence and personal interviews, have been analyzed and interpreted with scholarly thoroughness and yet always with an eye to the practical.



From his own experience, Dr. Sinclair knows all the factors involved, and he has overlooked none. For fear of "conditioning" responses, he did not even mention his business connection in sending questionnaires to educators. The answers — favorable and unfavorable — are all here. This is as detached and impartial a study as one could ask for. In its original draft (more extensive than this book), it was accepted by Northwestern University last summer in fulfillment of the thesis requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Much of Dr. Sinclair's material has been put into the compact form of tables and graphs, concerned with all the major points of his inquiry and reflecting the attitudes of business men, school administrators, and teachers. With the educators he has gone even further in breakdowns showing the reactions of designated groups — four groups of administrators and five groups of teachers.

The ground covered in the book is indicated by the titles of the nine chapters: Aims and Methods of the Study; Related Literature; Sponsored Aids — Their Nature, Purpose, and Content; How Aids Are Prepared and Produced; Availability and Distribution; Use and Relative Appeal of Various Aids; Value and Effectiveness; Relationships Between Business and Education; Summary and Conclusion. In addition to the Summary of the book, there is a summary for each chapter. Finally, a bibliography gives an extended list of articles and other references on sponsored aids. (BUSINESS-SPONSORED TEACHING AIDS,

by Thomas J. Sinclair, Ph.D., F. A. Owen Publishing Company, 113 pp. + XI — 50c.)

### MANAGEMENT MEN AND THEIR METHODS

Presenting 33 case studies of the latest management and executive techniques as practiced in the United States by enterprising business leaders. (Edited by Luis J. A. Villalon, Senior Editor, *Modern Industry*, Funk & Wagnalls Company. 270 pp. + XIV — \$3.00.)

### TRAINING IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

A record of recent successful experiments in scientific training of community leaders for dealing with the problems of intergroup relations, new methods for civic leaders, community workers and social scientists. A product of the Research Center for Group Dynamics, U. of Michigan. (By Ronald Lippitt, Harper & Brothers. 286 pp. + XIV — \$3.50.)

### TEAMWORK IN INDUSTRY

Specific ideas, suggestions and methods to improve labor-management relations for better production. Based on intensive research by modern industry in large and small companies. Twelve specific principles to guide a successful human relations program. (By William Seward, Funk & Wagnalls Company. 206 pp. + XV — \$3.00.)

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*We have not journeyed all this way across the centuries, across the oceans, across the mountains, across the prairies, because we are made of sugar candy.*

—WINSTON CHURCHILL

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor should be addressed:  
EDITOR, THE PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL  
711 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

## AHEAD OF HIS TIME

To the Editor:

Almost a decade ago Alexander Heron wrote his first book "Sharing Information with Employees." The message . . . proved to be years ahead of its time and, even recently, management writers and speakers have been talking about the need for "better communication" and "new" ways to inform employees about the facts of business life. Much industrial unrest might have been avoided if management men (and the writers and speakers who influence them) had taken the logical advice of Col. Heron and played their employee relations with all cards on the table.

In the July issue of your *Journal*, Alec Heron scores again — and again, ahead of his time. His brief, but excellent, article, "A New Interpretation of Management" should be read by every serious business leader — particularly by all who have a hand in influencing employee attitudes. Of course, so many of these "leaders" and their assistants are so busy "drawing lines between management and labor," defending "management's prerogatives," and "repeating poetic phrases about freedom and the sanctity of private property and the American Way of Life," that they probably won't get the point — *that wage earners must depend on management to sell the products of their work.*

This is a new concept upon which a completely new labor-management relationship can be built. Let's see that it is brought to the attention of the right people so that we can begin the development of a common basis of understanding between worker and management; so that it can prove the real unity of purpose and community of interest that has always existed; so that workers will begin to realize that their jobs, their standards of living, depend on management's ability to sell the product of their work.

J. M. TRICKETT  
Dean, School of Management

Golden Gate College  
San Francisco, California

\* \* \* \*

To the Editor:

. . . Colonel Heron made an important contribution to clear thinking in his article "A New Interpretation of Management" (*PR Journal* — July). His basic point that we are in fact living under a Management Economy clears the decks for a somewhat more sound approach to some of our problems. In the end result — with very few exceptions — we are all "hired help," whether we carry a lunch pail and work with our hands or whether we are fortunate enough to have a chauffeur and a mahogany flat top. This essential oneness of class in our "American Way of Life" is a concept so simple and so basic that it required the genius of Colonel Heron to point it out.

Let us iterate and reiterate this fundamental concept until it does become as familiar as "mother" and forget "free enterprise," "profit motive" and some of the other inaccurate phrases which we have been bandying about.

LINN CHURCH

San Francisco, California

## LOBBYING A NECESSITY

To the Editor:

The article by William H. Baldwin on public relations and the proposed lobbying inquiry in Congress (*PR Journal* — July) is most timely. If you are responsible for getting Mr. Baldwin to write it, you are to be commended and he is to be commended whether he wrote it voluntarily or by request.

If we could have more such frank and intelligent discussions of this subject, it would help to correct the checkered vest, black cigar, booze and boodle impression our publics have of this most important function. Unfortunately, many otherwise well-informed public relations practitioners have this same impression.

As Mr. Baldwin has stated, "Relations with government come within the proper scope of public relations functions just as clearly as do relations with stockholders, customers, . . ." He has emphasized the ever-growing lobbying activities of government itself which Representative Christian A. Herter termed, "Our Worst Form of Lobbying" in two challenging articles in *Reader's Digest* of September and December, 1947.

Legitimate lobbying is not only a right, but has become an absolute necessity for business on every level of government. This activity has too long been treated as something apart or, at best, a stepchild of public relations departments. Discussion of the subject has been almost totally ignored by all literature in the public relations field.

This is the kind of material that will make the *Journal* more valuable to the profession.

MONROE BUTLER

Legislative Representative

Los Angeles, California

## REQUIRES COOPERATION

To the Editor:

It is with a great deal of interest that I open each new issue of *The Public Relations Journal*, for I have found its articles interesting, stimulating and helpful. Believing that usefulness enhances value, I have a suggestion to make which I hope will appeal to you.

Would it be possible to include in the *Journal*, as a continuing feature, a listing of new and interesting material developed and issued by members of the Society? For example, if one of the members has developed a new approach on an educational program on cost reduction, or a unique financial report to employees, or an educational kit for teachers, or any similar material on subjects of interest to the membership, could there not be a thumbnail description together with the source of such material, provided of course that samples were available from the member.

. . . an exchange of materials among the members would be very helpful, and it is logical for the *Journal* to acquaint the membership with the availability of recommended material.

I am sure that a great many members of

the Society have material which would be helpful to others in the profession, yet who hesitate to send samples to the members. A column in the *Journal* would relieve them of any embarrassment.

GUY BERGHOFF

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

*What do PRSA members think of Mr. Berghoff's proposal? Will they cooperate to make it effective? What do YOU think? — Ed.*

## USE OWN MEDICINE

To the Editor:

In Thomas Parry's article "Toward Professional Status for Public Relations," (*PR Journal* — July) he very properly separates the two elements that frequently seem to get confused in discussions of the subject — professional standards and a code of ethics.

Since professional standards must precede recognition of professional status, it is undoubtedly a long range evolutionary subject. I would be more inclined to agree with Mr. Parry's friend that ten years may be required to arrive at that point, rather than his own optimistic conclusion that the goal can be realized in five years.

By all means let's get on with the adoption of a code of ethics, and meanwhile let's apply some public relations techniques to the problem — *our own public relations*.

It seems to me a consistent campaign of public relations is in order. More articles about public relations, and how it should be practiced as a profession, published in magazines of general business circulation, trade journals and the like, would be my suggestion.

PRSA's own aspirations and efforts toward professional status supplies the basic subject matter; PRSA's membership can furnish writers for such articles from among recognized leaders in the field; and PRSA administrative headquarters should have no difficulty in placing the articles in the right kind of publications.

GEORGE M. CARNES

New Orleans, Louisiana

## THE CHURCH AND PR

To the Editor:

I have read Mr. Chase's article. . . In my view he has done a careful job. But is it very penetrating?

You see, although saying that he is a Protestant layman, he reveals at once *a priori* loyalty, from the viewpoint of which he pro-

ceeds to question and attack the World Council's diagnosis of a sick society.

I am aware of the group of ideas which underlie "public relations" thinking, and admire and respect some of its exponents.

But it is hardly reasonable to expect the Protestant Churches to be handmaidens of a *priori* loyalty to democratic capitalism, or to any other. It is true that the rise of capitalism came along with the rise of Protestantism. But money lending and "free enterprise" have developed beyond recognition by 16th century business men since them. Our Protestant heritage does not include this method of doing business.

The World Council statement was the result of a meeting of minds from a good many countries, which approach differently — among Christian leaders — the problems of social justice and of society's responsibility to the individual. It is naive to expect their statement to conform to the particular tenets of American thinking.

I know and respect a fairly large group of the American participants. It is fair to say that this diagnosis is the only one I know of which springs from no *a priori* loyalty save

the truths of Protestant Christianity. It is not as champions of something else that they spoke.

People who are pro-something-else first will not appreciate a statement that does not champion their particular viewpoint. Yet it is a help to have a plea for a better way of living and working together than has yet been devised — to have a clear call that is not stateism nor communism nor the system here, however good some of its features. You see, even its best spokesmen cannot claim that it — democratic capitalism — has ever done more than exploit millions of people in the Asian area — it is Christians who are teaching them to read, and trying to implant the ideas of upstanding freedom.

Hence it is incumbent upon the exponents of any economic system to be mindful there are higher goals — even though they seem satisfied with something less than the Divine ethic and objective. . . .

God is no respecter of persons, or of systems.

MERRILL F. CLARKE

The Congregational Church  
New Canaan, Connecticut

## NEED FOR UNDERSTANDING THEME OF ANNUAL PRSA MEETING

"The Second Half Century — The Need for Understanding" has been announced as the theme of the Second Annual Meeting of the Public Relations Society of America to be held December 4-6 at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City. Franklyn Waltman, Public Relations Director, Sun Oil Company, Philadelphia, is General Chairman of the meeting. The three-day sessions will include meetings of the PRSA Executive Committee and Board of Directors, as well as the annual election of board members and Society officers. Two general sessions and at least one half-day program of panel discussions are planned. There will be two general conference luncheons, December 5 and December 6; and the PRSA Annual Dinner, at which the annual public relations awards will be made the featured event Monday evening, December 5.

The Committee indicates that invitations will be extended through PRSA members to people engaged in public relations activity so they may attend convention events and general sessions and participate by means of a guest registration arrangement.

The General Committee, Mr. Waltman, Chairman, consists of seven subcommittees, composed as follows:

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## *Welcome to New Members*

The Executive Committee of the Public Relations Society of America, Inc. meeting in official session, unanimously elected to membership in the Society the following individual:

### ELECTED TO ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

**Dahlem, Karl**—Regional Director of Public Relations for New England, American Airlines, Inc., Boston, Mass.

## POSTINGS

**THE** By-laws of the Society require that applications for membership be posted at least 30 days before they are submitted to the Board of Directors or to the Executive Committee for approval. Active members desiring to comment on the following applicants should write the Eligibility Committee, Public Relations Society of America, Inc., 525 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, New York.

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**O'CONNELL**—Public Relations Director, ATF Incorporated, Elizabeth, N. J. *Sponsors:* Richard H. Bailey and Buell A. Patterson.

**TAUBKIN, IRVIN S.**—Promotion Manager, The New York Times, New York City. *Sponsors:* Weston Smith and Russell G. Sims.

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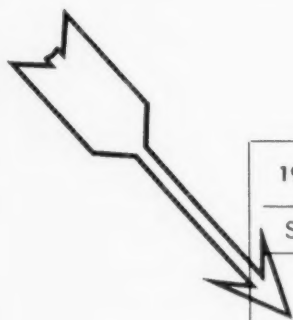
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